

COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 8, 2019

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Washington, D.C. – Coalition for Health Funding Executive Director Emily Holubowich issued the following statement in response to Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Alex Azar’s letter to the House Appropriations Committee about the Department’s intention to transfer another \$385 million from health programs to the Office of Refugee Resettlement:

The administration’s immigration policies continue to take a toll on the health of migrant children and families. Earlier this week, we learned more about the extensive abuse—including sexual abuse—of children in the government’s care who, as a result, will be at increased risk of mental and physical health complications throughout their lives. Today we learned that an additional \$385 million will be cut from public health and research to fund these failed policies.

Last October, the Coalition for Health Funding sent HHS [a letter](#) on behalf of 110 health organizations expressing deep concerns about the impact of the administration’s policies on these children’s health and well-being, and about the impact of these funding transfers on chronically underfunded health programs. We urged the Department to make public its plan to respond to and recover from this public health crisis and avoid future funding transfers. We received no response.

The public health community is in the midst of responding to a series of crises throughout the country, including a measles outbreak and addiction epidemic, and every dollar counts. Additional funding, not less, is what is required to improve and protect the health of the population. In total, HHS has diverted nearly a billion dollars from the discovery of cures, outbreak response, and access to critical preventive and primary care services. Public health and research programs cannot continue to bear the burden of paying for an immigration policy that harms children and families.

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The Coalition for Health Funding is a nonprofit alliance working to preserve public health investments in the interest of all Americans. Our 95-member organizations together represent more than 100 million patients and consumers, health providers, professionals, and researchers.

<http://www.publichealthfunding.org>